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AN
E S S A Y

TOWARD FORMING

A More Complete Representation

OF THE

C O M M O N S

OF

G R E A T B R I T A I N .

By JOHN LONGLEY, Esq.

OF ROCHESTER.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. JOHNSON, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

MD,CC,XCV.



TO WILLIAM SMITH, Esq.

THE HONOURABLE THOMAS ERSKINE,

AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE

SOCIETY

OF THE

FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE;

As a tribute of respect for the benefits which they have endeavoured to procure for a country not yet enough enlightened to be adequately grateful; the following speculations of an individual, on the important subject of a Reform in the Election of the Representatives of the People in the House of Commons of Great Britain, are dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

ADVER-

TO WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.

The Honorable THOMAS ERSKINE,

AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE

SOCIETY



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As a tribute of respect to the memory of the late
distinguished antiquary and collector, the following
collection of his manuscripts, printed and unprinted
manuscripts, and other objects of interest, has been
presented to the Trustees of the British Museum, and
is now deposited in the Department of Manuscripts, and
is open to the public for inspection.

THE AUTHOR.

ADVER.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following plan has been the employment of some leisure hours of the Author for the last three years. It would have been submitted to the Public some time ago, but for an accident in the first instance. Afterwards the public mind appeared so unfit to receive any thing like a proposal of Political Reform, that it was laid aside entirely, and probably never would have appeared at all, had not the society of the Friends of the People, in their late publication, intimated a wish to receive communications from those who had turned
their

their thoughts to the subject. It will be seen that the following plan coincides with theirs in all its great principles, though certainly the Author never had any intercourse with them respecting it. Where it differs from theirs, perhaps it is so far worse. Theirs indeed is so excellently tempered, that it may be imagined few of the friends to Reform in any shape can feel a reluctance to subscribe to it in toto.

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AN
E S S A Y
TOWARD FORMING
A More Perfect Representation
OF THE
COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

C H A P. I.

AN opinion pretty generally prevailed some time ago, that a plan of Reform of the Representation of the people in the House of Commons was likely to be produced to Parliament, under such auspices as would probably ensure it success. Being ignorant at that time of the plans of others, and never having seen any heretofore which were perfectly satisfactory to me, I threw on paper the thoughts contained in the following pages. I doubt not but the plan might be improved or a better substituted, by a more skilful political architect. But as in the building a house, an
B unpro-

unprofessional friend may sometimes suggest to the owner a happy idea, so in the present instance, though no considerable part of the design may be adopted, it may furnish hints to those capable of pursuing them. Indeed the very attention necessary to correct wrong ideas, and to refute fallacies, is no unwholesome or unimproving exercise to the mind.

In considering the improvement of the democratical part of our constitution, it will not be improper to lay down some general truths; which, forming the basis of all free and representative governments, may assist us in mending our own; or at least prevent our falling into gross errors on one side, from our too great eagerness to avoid them on the other.

These, indeed, have no pretensions to novelty, being no more than the principles of Locke, much abridged, and differently worded. They who would wish to see at length the arguments supporting these postulates, must recur to his immortal Treatise on Civil Government. But as many have lately appeared ignorant of these principles, and others who have known them have controverted them, I have thought it right to produce and avow them.

A X I O M

A X I O M . I.

No human being has a right to exercise authority over another, unless for the benefit of the governed. This benefit may be either *immediate*, as in the instance of a parent exercising authority over his child, or a physician over his insane patient; or *mediate*, for the benefit of the civil society to which they both belong, as a magistrate over his fellow citizens; or else *mediate* in a different way, for the benefit of mankind at large, as a general over the prisoners taken in a just and necessary war!*

I prefer negating the unfounded claims of authority on one hand, to a positive establishment of equality of rights on the other.

Though I am fully convinced of the truth of the assertion in its plain and proper sense, that all men are born equal in natural rights, yet there has been so much equivocation on the term, and wilful confusion of the equality of circumstances, such as rank, riches, health,

* It is evident the case of contracts, as those of masters and servants, does not interfere with this axiom. The benefit is there supposed mutual.

strength, and wisdom, with the equality of rights, which means no more than the right of the weak to justice, as well as the strong, that I think it better to avoid the expression. Besides, when a positive claim is made, the maker must clear his title: when we resist a claim of another, we may wait till he adduces his proofs. In this instance we may put the opponents of the axiom to prove that authority may be lawfully exercised, *and not* for the benefit of its subjects.

I will not say the authority of the Supreme Being over his creatures is so founded. I am sure, however, it is no otherwise exercised.

A X I O M II.

The human race being naturally divided into males and females, and a greater share of strength and power of enduring fatigue being given to the males, with exemption from child-bearing and infirmities peculiar to females, nature points out the ~~the~~ males for active employments in public, and the females for domestic ones in their families. Therefore legislators, magistrates, and warriors must be males.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wollstonecraft, in her ingenious and singular book on the Rights of Woman, justly reprobates that system of female education, which, by supposing the mind incapable of the severer studies, debases it to frivolity; and misdirects the attention due to the acquisition of virtue and knowledge to the externals of dress and behaviour. Not content with this, she pleads for an indiscriminate education of the sexes during youth; and an equal admission to all civil and political functions afterwards.

Sed vetant leges Jovis—

Nature, that is, the bodily constitution (for I decide nothing as to the sex of minds) must first be changed.

A X I O M III.

Nature impels man to society, and chiefly to that of the sexes. Now it being evidently for the good of the species, that the promiscuous commerce of them be restrained, and the continuance of the species provided for by the permanent union of one male with one female, it becomes

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necessary

neccessary to attribute to one of the parties the power of deciding where their wills disagree. This is given to the male on account of his greater strength, both bodily and perhaps mental. By being employed abroad, he knows more of the relations in which he stands to those about him; and is therefore best able in general to regulate the conduct of himself and his family. Therefore all civilized nations give power to the husband over the wife, who voluntarily consents to it for the benefit of the partnership, when she contracts the union.

I am not ignorant of the illustrious list of exceptions to the precedence of masculine minds; of the Barbaulds, Montagues, Carters, Chapones, Brularts, Macaulays, and many others. Still they are but exceptions; and the general superiority, even in understanding, is as yet on the side of the males.

Mrs. Wollstonecraft considers this power claimed by husbands over their wives as usurpation. If she can point out any better means of settling differences of opinion between two persons bound to live together, (and who cannot generally take a third for umpire,) except by giving one of them a casting vote, she will prove herself at least superior to most men.

A X I O M

A X I O M IV.

The condition of the human infant being helpless beyond that of any other animal, a long series of cares and labours on the part of the parents is necessary in order to educate it to maturity. To enable them to fulfil this duty, parents must possess authority over their children till that period, while they remain a part of their family.

A X I O M V.

Not only individuals, but families are impelled by nature to associate. Wherever a cluster of these is collected, some acts, best done by a part, will be found necessary or profitable for the whole. Some of these acts will require considerable previous thought and arrangement of the powers, to be employed. The whole community delegates powers for these purposes to a part for the good of the whole. This is the foundation of the authority of magistrates.

Either this is the foundation of government; or it has been imposed on mankind by a Superior Being, for it has been assumed by some men over others without their consent. The maintainers of the divine origin of government must prove its pedigree*.

They who, as a matter of right, defend the assumption of authority by one man over another without his consent, so as to establish a permanent power over him and his posterity, must take care to prove that right, without at the same time proving the law of force to be that of nature, and the consequent right to commit every crime when inclination is seconded by power.

A X I O M VI.

When these clusters are numerous, and aggregated into a nation, the affairs of the society become numerous and complicated in proportion. The citizens not being able personally to give unremitted attention to the

* *The Rev. Mr. Whitaker*, Rector of Ruan Lanyhorne, probably thinks he has done this. I will allow him to have taken the first preliminary step, when he has ascertained the lineal heir of the right of primogeniture in Shem, the eldest son of Noah. I will just hint, that probably this rightful sovereign of mankind is not to be found in Europe,

public business, are led to constitute a permanent magistracy. The rules which define the duties of those who are entrusted with legislative, executive and judicial power by the citizens, form the constitution of the state.

A X I O M VII.

It appears by experience that a free nation is more happy and prosperous than an enslaved one ; and that a nation where the people at large share in the legislature by their representatives, is more happy and prosperous than one where the citizens vote on public questions individually.

A X I O M VIII.

It is sufficient in a large society for the purpose of securing liberty, and directing the general concerns of the state, that each family be represented in the legislature ; and that in all functions which the people have reserved to themselves, each family act by the vote of its head.

In settling the right of suffrage, two extremes are to be avoided ; the one, that of
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confining it to a class whose interests may become different from that of the society; the other, that of extending it to those against whom there is a reasonable presumption that they will not exercise it either freely, on their own part, or beneficially to the state; or to such numbers as to render it easy for impostors to claim it. The first seems the fault of our present representation, the second that of the newest system in France*. The plan of the Constituent Assembly, which made the right of suffrage to depend on the payment of a certain amount of direct taxes, was preferable to that which succeeded it. But I object to this, because it is *possible* for a state to subsist without any direct taxes at all. In a society extremely simple and remote from external danger, the little necessary business may be done by the magistrates gratis. I question if the inhabitants of the Pelew Islands pay any taxes to Abba Thulle. Taxation, therefore, being adventitious, and not necessary to the existence of a state, it is improper to found on such a basis the important right of suffrage. Instead of this artificial foundation, there appears one

* By their present Constitution, a qualification of property is required,

plainer,

plainer, more natural, and universally applicable. Before any more complex civil union, mankind were collected in families. Therefore these primary aggregations of individuals may be considered as the lowest integral parts of a political community. They actually were so considered by Alfred, when he planned his admirable division of his kingdom. Even now, when representatives are to be elected, and there is no custom or charter to direct otherwise, the constitution orders them to be chosen by the householders. But admitting for a moment that the contribution to taxes were a proper qualification, even this will lead us to the householder. Upon him falls immediately almost every personal tax, and circuitously almost every other. Hence he is deeply interested in the conduct of public affairs, and particularly in that of the finances of the state. He must probably too have some property, and some character. By giving the right of suffrage to this class of citizens, we shall bid the fairest to avoid each extreme. They are much too numerous to be corrupted, and yet by proper regulations they may exercise their right in perfect tranquillity, as they do in America. An election there was never
known

known to be disgraced with a riot. It is their interest to keep the peace, and to protect the rights of property. Nor when voting in the midst of their neighbours, can they be personated, or suffer intrusion by strangers. Considering then a nation as a collection of families, it appears sufficient that in all functions which the people have reserved to themselves; each family act by the vote of its head. By this means many embarrassing questions will be avoided concerning the rights of females, minors, and domestics, which can hardly be resolved by the advocates for universal suffrage, without abandoning somewhat of their principles. In general any young man, by industry and good conduct, may place himself in this class. The ambition among them, which makes it an object, is laudable in itself and beneficial to their country; and deserves the encouragement of the addition of civil rights, to counterbalance the weight of additional taxes and duties, to which, by commencing householders, they are exposed.

C H A P. II.

IN the former chapter we have laid the foundation of all lawful authority, and have traced society from its more simple domestic forms to that of a nation. We have also determined the class of citizens, who, with most benefit to the commonwealth, may possess the right of suffrage. It remains to apply our principles to the investigation of the mode of Reform best adapted to the situation of our country. It may not be improper for the information of those who may not be aware of the monstrous deformity of our present system of representation, to set before them a few facts, to convince them of the necessity of a radical amendment.

I believe Mr. Burgh, under whom I had the happiness of passing the greatest part of my childhood, was the first who published, in his Political Disquisitions, the fact, that the majority of the House of Commons was returned by less than 6000 votes. This he makes out by taking only the majority of
electors

electors in the small boroughs which he enumerates. The whole numbers would have amounted to upwards of 11,000, and were so stated in the Report of the late Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to consider of the state of the representation. He does not take any notice of the state of patronage; and in that respect he seems not to have been fully informed of the extent of the abuses in this part of the constitution. From the History of the Boroughs of Great Britain, lately published, it appears,

That, of 513 English members, 330 are returned by patrons and proprietors of boroughs, and other places having representation.

That of these, 180 are returned by Peers.

That of these Peers, 16 only return 80 members.

That not above 14 members are returned directly by ministry.

That of 558 members, the whole House of Commons, 270 members are returned by places having less than 200 voters each.

That 207 are returned by places having less than 100 each.

That

That 154 are returned by places having less than 50 each.

That 92 are returned by places having less than 25 each,

And 42 by places having less than 6 each.

The Author of that book not being thoroughly acquainted with the patronage of Scotland, has almost entirely omitted it, though from the paucity of electors, even in the counties, it must be full as much exposed to influence and corruption as England. And that it is so, is proved by the alarming dissatisfaction now prevailing there, on this very subject.

All this has been since clearly established by the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on this subject. The result of their enquiries does not differ materially from the statement above, as to the number of voters who elect the majority. By the Committee appointed by the friends of the people, it is reported, "That the gross defects and abuses, which they have proved to exist in the present mode of representation, have established a system of private patronage, which renders the condition of the House of Commons practically as follows :

71 Peers

71	Peers and the Treasury nominate	90	
	Procure the return of	—	77
			167
91	Commoners nominate	—	82
	Procure the return of	—	57
			139
—			
162	return	—	—
	Members out of	513.	306

That including seventeen boroughs, besides containing, on an average, not 150 voters each,

2611 Persons return — — 327
Members. To these add 28, who are returned by compromises; and it will appear in what manner such a number of the members of the House of Commons is elected, as constitutes a *majority* of no less than 197 of the representatives of England and Wales." This report is probably more accurate than that of the author of the history quoted above.

The petition presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Grey, from the society of the Friends of the People, associated for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform, establishes the same facts still more forcibly, offering evidence to prove them. It is indeed a composition that, for weight of the matters stated,

stated, clearness of their arrangements, and importance of the consequences to be deduced from them, has seldom been equalled.

Now no man can steadily contemplate this and say it is right. The timid or interested politician will readily admit all is not as it should be, but at the same time insists that the risque of amendment would be more than the benefit. He is eloquent on the dangers of innovation, describes pathetically the miseries of France, contrasted with our own happiness, and concludes with an appeal to our feelings, whether we would desire to plunge our country in equal distress.

To this it may be replied in the first place, that a matter so radically wrong in principle cannot be classed among those lighter evils which it may be better to bear than to attempt to remove. No government can pass well through a season of danger which has not the confidence of the people. Now the people at such a time cannot have confidence in a Legislature so constituted. Instead of every man feeling himself interested by his best affections and habits to support it, and the united mass of the people displaying the unconquerable vigor and inexhausted resources

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of a mighty nation, the efforts of Government will be cold, feeble and ineffectual ; the hired service of mercenaries indifferent to the cause, instead of the generous exertions of patriot citizens, glorying to conquer or to die for their country. Nor is this mere theory : it was felt in the American War. Into that war the nation was reluctantly forced, by Ministers, who continually deceived the people at large by misrepresentations, sanctioned by a corrupt legislature, till they had rendered it in some degree popular. With the capture of Burgoyne that popularity failed, and was but feebly revived by the union of America with France, or afterwards by the exposure of the whole trade of Holland to the rapacity of our cruizers. It finally sunk with the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. Then and long after the conductors of the war charged their ill success on the opposition to it, both in and out of Parliament. Now however, with unblushing boldness, the abettors of it transfer their guilt on the nation at large, and affect to declare that they were but the instruments of the will of the people. But the people were deceived and misled. The guilt and horrors that accompanied it belong exclusively

sively to the deceivers. They too are primarily responsible for the consequences of the present state of Europe. They first roused to action, in America, the bold spirit that questions the reasonableness of usages, however ancient, and of authority however dignified. The occasion of rousing it would never have been given, had Parliament been in unison with the Nation; or, had it been given, the war would have been, on our part, of a very different description.

Nothing indeed is easier than for a ministry to deceive the people, through a corrupt legislature. In the American War—a war not so much against our colonies as against the vital principles of the constitution, the delusion was kept up at first by the assertions, that all the men of property and consequence were our friends; and then, that if we did not kill the Americans they would kill us. I much fear that the late danger from French principles and emissaries has been greatly exaggerated by ministers, to serve their own purpose of plunging the nation into a war with France; who, whatever may have been her crimes, certainly did not, at that time, seek hostility with us.

The consequences of this false and fatal step are of a magnitude too giant-like for calculation, and almost for contemplation itself. A government, strengthened by a *real* representation of the people, is perhaps the only one able to face them without destruction.

It is not reasonable, nor conformable to human nature, to conclude, that by extending the foundations of our representation beyond the narrow and insecure limits of patronage and aristocracy, to the broad basis of the householders of the nation, the people will be less inclined to support a legislature so equally and intimately connected with them. The arguments of those who urge still farther changes would lose their force, could it be replied that we have already a legislature we can trust. Therefore, to prevent farther effects from these arguments, and to cure the irritation they have already excited in men's minds, to save us from the miseries of France, and to reconcile the people to their governors, let the great aristocracy which rules us, the part in opposition as well as that with ministry, restore to the people a free and general representation. Let them not imitate the conduct
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of the wretched ministers of the American war, whose concessions were always too late. By which means the very measures which, adopted in time, would have worked the most noble and salutary effects, afterwards only served to make those who offered them ridiculous. Since the late decided demonstrations of loyalty and attachment to the constitution in all parts of the country, the apprehension of danger from equalising the representation must appear totally unfounded. This act of justice to the people would be but a fair and proper return on the part of Government for the unequivocal proofs of attachment they have given by the numerous associations for its defence. It is impossible to obviate every apprehension of danger, expressed by real or affected timidity; but experience will teach us, that the ill-omened predictions of statesmen of the evils to result from popular measures, are seldom fulfilled. Even in the instance which will be immediately opposed to this assertion, I mean that of France, much of its recent calamity is to be attributed to the league of sovereigns against its constitution; which gave too plausible grounds to the infamous Jacobin party for inflaming the people

ple to depose and murder their King. That league has already enslaved, robbed, and dismembered Poland; and if its arms are successful, will do the same by France. How *we* are to be recompenced or justified for joining it, remains to be seen. The danger indeed lies the other way; in the refusal of fair, reasonable demands of redress, where the grievance is undoubted, and the risque of redressing it no more than the ordinary one of almost every measure of Government beyond the mere routine of office.

Another evil arising from the present system of representation strikes most forcibly on those who see somewhat of the interior of elections, and who are not hardened enough by such scenes to contemplate them and their consequences with apathy. There appears in the majority of voters, especially of the lower sort, a total want of feeling of the relation they stand in to the public, and of the important trust they are called on to discharge. They consider an election as their harvest; urge a serious claim to making the most of their franchise, especially as the opportunity recurs so seldom; and look on a man as a fool, a knave, or an enthusiast, who

pretends to act from superior motives. Where, "not to be corrupted is the shame," oaths and penalties may be multiplied without any other effect than an equal multiplication of perjury and corruption. Accordingly we see a deluge of drunkenness, riot, and profligacy of every kind attending a contested election. In defiance of the laws, candidates are obliged to open houses to treat the voters, and procure agents to bribe them, with no other security than that their adversaries offend equally with themselves. Whatever order may be introduced into a neighbourhood by the exertions of the magistrates, or the instructions of the clergy, by the education of the young, or the reformation of the old, it is generally overturned by an election; and the interval till the next is scarcely sufficient to restore it to be again destroyed. These mischiefs are worth our getting rid of at any risque, short of a dissolution of government. But they cannot be cured without a more equal representation; and then, as will be shewn hereafter, a few simple regulations will annihilate them.

Indeed we are continually told by the opposers of reform, that none is wanted but that of our manners, and that it will be sufficient

if every one reforms himself. Let these sage politicians be told, that a general profligacy of manners in a nation is a heavy charge against its government. That where the government refuses to remove, and on the contrary encourages temptations to corruption, debauchery, and perjury, much more of the guilt lies at the door of the governors than at that of the wretched individuals who are seduced by them.

C H A P. III.

IN the plan to be proposed for a reformed representation, I shall take for its foundation that division of the kingdom, the work of the immortal Alfred, which now forms the basis of the administration of our laws; and which, till the Norman conquest, I am persuaded, formed also that part of the popular share of the legislature, of the Michel and Wittenagemotes. That the Saxon constitution was a free and happy one, may be proved by the fond
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attachment of our ancestors to it ; and their repeated demands of the restoration of the laws of the Confessor. By these they meant no particular code, but the general constitution ; which was so violently injured and impaired at the Norman conquest, as even yet to feel the wrong.

I propose therefore, in the first place, to revive the ancient view of Frankpledge. This was a meeting once a year, or oftener, of the householders and residents within the Vill, the lowest Saxon division of territory, for the purpose of classing its inhabitants in their respective tithings, and admitting those, whose age entitled them to the privilege of taking the oath of allegiance to the king and obedience to the laws ; by which they became members of their tything, and through that of the greatest political society of the realm. This meeting, by being held with the Court Leet, in time was considered as in a great degree identified with it.

I propose that the legislature shall direct the revival of this meeting for its original purposes. Its first business will be to examine the subsisting remains of the ancient division of the Vill into Boroughs and Tithings ; and to correct and adapt that division to its modern state.

state. This will be infinitely easier, should the legislature have previously adopted a plan of a reform in the parochial divisions. This meeting should take place every year in the month of October.

Every householder should be bound to appear there, by himself, or one of his family as a sufficient proxy, deliver in a list of his family, inmates, and servants. He himself also, and every male of his family who has not done it before, should at this meeting take an oath of allegiance to the King and obedience to the laws; which should supersede the necessity of repeating continually the bundle of long obscure oaths with which every avenue to public office and business is now incumbered. These lists being copied, and transmitted to the clerks of the county courts, an accurate enumeration of the inhabitants of Britain may be obtained; a matter of the first consequence to government; since without it they must often conclude on various subjects at random. Every householder being thus registered and classed, all questions on the right of voting will be reduced to a narrow compass. In general nothing more will require determination, than whether the voter questioned was registered

tered as a qualified housholder in a tything at the last view of Frankpledge.

Though the division of the country into parishes was originally ecclesiastical, it is now adopted for so many civil purposes, and the people are so much better acquainted with it than with the old one into Vills, that I propose it should entirely take place of it; and that the parish should be declared in all respects a civil as well as ecclesiastical division of the county, instead of the ancient Vills. The division immediately above the parish is the hundred, whose officer is a high constable, as that of the parish is a petty one. Between the hundred and the county there was originally another degree, which is still preserved in Kent under the name of lathes, in Suffex under that of rapes, and in some other counties under that of tithing, or wapentake. It appears that this division, or one nearly like it, if generally revived, would be particularly convenient for the purposes of election; as will be shewn hereafter.

The Saxon regularity of districts being thus restored, and every housholder known and registered, I propose giving to them (subject to one restriction) the exclusive right of electing mem-

members to the legislature. Not to do a harsh or perhaps an unjust thing, I would continue that right to those who had already acquired it by becoming free of any city, or borough; but without permitting such freedom to convey the right in future.

From the present state of artificial society in this country, and the great inequality of conditions, perhaps it may be necessary to limit the right of voting to householders inhabiting a house of the value of 5*l.* per annum, and upwards. Below that value they are frequently left untaxed in their parishes; partly on account of their inability to pay, and partly to avoid giving them a settlement. The habitation being above or below this value, must in this case be noticed in the register of Frankpledge. I am sensible this restriction derogates somewhat from the principles I have laid down; but on the whole it appears *at this time, and in our situation*, the best adapted to practice. The electors being themselves virtual representatives of all who from whatever cause do not give their votes, as minors, females, the sick, or absent; it is reasonable to attach a qualification to them, which on one hand may be easily obtained by
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the exertion of those qualities which make men good citizens, of industry and steadiness; and on the other may be a pledge to the state of their interest in preserving the constitution, order, and obedience to the laws. At the same time, I am not confident of the propriety of the limitation above-mentioned, farther than to exclude paupers actually receiving parochial relief. On the whole, attaching the right of suffrage to the householder, paying parochial taxes, appears as unexceptionable as any mode hitherto devised, provided the rating be not left entirely to the discretion of parish officers. There is much abuse in the corporations where voters now depend on it. There seems more simplicity in making the vote to depend on the housekeeper's own declaration of his house-rent registered at the view of Frankpledge, and an easier prevention or detection of fraud, than in making it necessary for another previously to rate him to the parochial taxes, or for him to appeal to a magistrate on his conceiving himself injuriously and fraudulently omitted. Every man residing on his own property, however small, should have a vote.

I do not see the use of making the right of suffrage more complicated. Though that
which

which I propose appears at first sight merely personal, yet in reality it gives considerable influence both to the owner of property, and the contribution to the public burdens. The housekeeper is nearly identified with the latter; and in general he must in some rank at least be classed with the former.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Classing the Electors, and the Mode of Election.

WE are now to determine the classing of the electors, in order to the exercise of their franchise. It appears that this will be best done by divisions of the country, less than the counties, but larger than the parishes. By the returns made by the several views of Frankpledge to the clerk of the county court, the number of active citizens in the county will be known to a certainty. I propose then, that
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the clerk of each county court shall be bound to transmit an account of the number of householders, qualified as electors, to the Speaker of the subsisting House of Commons a competent time before every new election, distinguishing the parishes they inhabit. The Speaker, with the assistance of a Committee of that House, chosen by ballot, shall apportion to each county the number of members it shall return at the ensuing election, according to the proportion borne by its number of active citizens, to that of the whole realm; and shall also divide the country into proper districts for the purpose of election, to be called wapentakes, rapes, or lathes, by classing so many contiguous parishes together as shall contain as near as may be a proportionate number of householders to elect two members to the legislature. This apportionment and division shall be immediately printed and sent to every sheriff in due time before the election.

The number of members and divisions of each county being once properly settled, would probably not often require alteration. The allotment however should be renewed every election, and the power be never considered as obsolete, but be always exercised on
every

every considerable increase or decrease of inhabitants.

The number of the legislative body of the Commons shall be 600.

The difference between 558 and 600 is not enough to create much difference of opinion. I think it clear the present number is not too great. Perhaps Wales and Scotland are under their proportion even more than Cornwall is above it.

There shall be a previous meeting of the householders of each wapentake, in which the senior acting magistrate of the district who shall be present shall preside, on a certain day in the month of June before every election, for the nomination of the candidates proposed to be elected by such wapentake. Any qualified householder may there propose any other qualified householder to be a candidate. His motion being seconded by another of the same description, the clerk of the wapentake shall take down the name of such candidate, and of his proposer and seconder. Lists of such candidates shall be printed immediately after the meeting, and transmitted by the clerk to the high constable of each parish, who shall distribute them to the householders. He shall also
cause

cause the said list to be read over in the church on the next Sunday morning immediately before the sermon, and a copy to be affixed on the church door, and to be published three times in some county newspaper; and no candidate shall be admitted at the subsequent election, who shall not have been so nominated.

A chief town in every wapentake shall be appointed by the legislature for holding the nomination meetings and elections. If there are more than one town fit for these purposes, they shall take them in rotation. The returning officer of each wapentake shall be chosen at the nomination meeting by the householders from among the magistrates residing and acting within the said wapentake.

The citizens shall appear at the nomination and election meetings, without arms or staves; except the peace officers, and those ordered by the magistrates to assist them.

All cockades, and other party badges, shall be forbidden at elections, and on every occasion relating to them.

The members of the House of Commons shall be all elected on one certain day, through the whole kingdom, in the month of July, and no citizen can vote at more than one election;

nor shall any election last more than one day.

Every candidate may be required by two electors to swear himself, bona fide, possessed of property in this country producing an income for life of £.500 per annum at least, and to particularise of what it consists, and that the same is clear above all his debts and just demands on him. If he refuses this, he cannot be a candidate, and the votes given to him are lost.*

If the candidate is absent at the election, an affidavit made by him before a magistrate, since his nomination, to this effect, may be received:

All votes at elections shall be by ballot.

The electors' oaths shall be abolished, and instead of them the candidates shall swear that they have not bribed them, nor attempted it

* Perhaps, after all, property may safely be left to its own influence, without any qualification specified by the law. The House of Commons was much more the representative and guardian of the people before tests or qualifications existed; nor was there any complaint of the election of insufficient persons. Andrew Marvell, who refused unlimited offers of place or pension from Charles II's. confidential minister in person, and specifically a thousand pounds, when he was obliged to borrow a guinea the same day for his dinner, because he could not in conscience act as the King wanted him, could have found no place in a modern parliament.

in any way or manner, by themselves, agents, or friends. The electors and candidates shall still remain open to prosecution for bribery.

The expences of the clerks, booths, and other necessaries for the election, shall be defrayed proportionably from the poor rates of the several parishes of the Wapentake.

Every member may demand from the Treasury a sum of four guineas a day for every day that he shall actually attend the House of Commons, during the Sessions, such attendance to be certified by one of the clerks, and the day's pay to be forfeited if he departs the House without leave of the Speaker*.

The representation of the people shall be renewed every two years by a fresh election. The electors cannot in that period recall their choice; but the representative may resign his seat, when a fresh election shall take place for the remainder of the parliament.

The same members may be re-elected, but not to more than three succeeding legislatures.

* Supposing every member to attend six days in the week for twenty-six weeks, that is half the year; this expence would be 300,000*l*. Probably the real cost would not be more than 200,000; which would be amply compensated to the nation by the attentive and regular carrying on of public business.

All contested elections shall be tried by a separate judicature, which shall be formed of four serjeants, or barristers at law, nominated by the House of Commons, but not being members of it, who shall have power to summon juries and sit continually for that purpose, going round to each county till all are determined. The several juries to be summoned of householders within the county where the contest arises, but not within the Wapentake.

I will venture to affirm, that under these provisions and regulations the House of Commons will be, 1st an adequate representative of the people, both now and hereafter. 2dly, That they would be elected with as little sinister influence, or corruption, as human nature such as ours in this country will admit. 3dly, That they would not sit long enough to acquire different interests and views from their constituents. 4thly, That they would nevertheless be independent of popular clamour, excited by the caprice or faction of the moment. 5thly, That an election would be a sober, orderly meeting of business, not a scene of dirty chicane and manœuvres, mixed with beastly debauchery, detestable violence, and shocking perjury. 6thly, That few disputes
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would arise on contested elections, and those would be easily decided. 7thly, That the temptation to taking a collusive qualification will be diminished. 8thly, That the characters of the candidates would be thoroughly known to the electors. 9thly, That the trouble of elections to the country would be much lessened. 10thly, That in general those persons would be chosen, who, from their property, reputation, conduct and residence among their constituents, had established a permanent interest founded on reciprocal good offices.

Many more minute regulations might be advantageously adopted, such perhaps as that of voting at the election meeting of the Wapentake by parishes. Some efficacious means might also be devised to prevent fraud at the ballot. But all these are matters of detail, which would be easily settled were the great principles which I have proposed once adopted. It is, however, with much less confidence that I look toward this than when I first began to put down my thoughts on this subject. The late events in France have been so dextrously improved by ministers, and the tribe who are interested in the continuance of abuses, that the great mass of the people, the majority of whose leaders have always been Tories in prin-

ciple, whatever they may have been in profession, is rendered at present disinclined to any amendment of the representation, or change whatever. They are thoroughly frightened, and I have no doubt that advantage will be taken of their fears hereafter, as it has already.* Be that as it may, if in the course of human events, the phænomenon of a patriot minister should arise, who should be willing to found his character and power on the great unbribed and enlightened majority of the nation, instead of the poor corrupted one of a House of Commons constituted like the present; if such a minister, comparing different plans for his great purpose, should, among others, look at the foregoing one, whether he adopted any part of it or not, I shall be amply gratified. The end once obtained, I shall be little solicitous by whom the means may have been suggested.

But the follies and crimes of the rulers of the French have blasted the principles, and ruined the cause of liberty through Europe.

* This has been remarkably fulfilled by ministers having carried the suspension of the Habeas Corpus on such shallow pretences, with so little opposition, either in or out of Parliament, and by the present most unconstitutional extension of the law of treason, and abridgement of the right of free discussion.

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They had a noble deposit in their hands—the new Liberties and Constitution of a great nation. Misled, overawed, and threatened by a few miscreants, and the rascally populace of Paris, they have sacrificed their trust, and with it the prosperity, perhaps the existence of their country. By the illegal restraint and subsequent deposition of their King, they tore up the genuine tree of Liberty which, with patience and moderation, might have taken root and flourished: by his murder, as injurious to their interest, as it was criminal and cruel in itself, they have united all Europe in hatred against them.* Instead of advancing the æra of the freedom of mankind, they have dreadfully retarded it: they have contrived, even in this country, to make its principles unfashionable. The divine origin of the power and right of kings is now the doctrine of the day in England. There is, therefore, little chance at present for attention to the Rights of the people to a more equal Representation. Having, however, early imbibed the principles of liberty, as laid down by Mr.

* I have not yet seen any proof that the king corresponded with the enemies of the nation. There was none such produced at his trial. Even if he had, his person was inviolable, though his authority were forfeited.

Locke, conceiving them to be the only stable and proper basis of good government, I cannot abandon them merely because they have been abused by profligates and madmen. Christianity itself, pure and gracious as it came from the hands of its divine Author, when compelled into the service of avarice and ambition, has degraded mankind with superstition, and tortured it with cruelty. I fear a period of despotism may be necessary to counteract these impressions, and to restore those feelings which used in an English bosom to vibrate to the very sound of liberty. When that revival shall take place, and the claim of the people to a fair representation shall become irresistible, then it will be the duty of every lover of his country, to exert his influence, that whatever is done may be done wisely and soberly; with the most advantage to the public, and the least injury to individuals; to preserve carefully the great outlines and frame of the constitution; and to persuade his fellow countrymen, "quod difficillimum est, retinere in libertate modum."

C H A P. IV.

I shall conclude by a farther answer to some popular objections to reform, which have been lately urged and circulated with great industry. It is said to be unfair to turn the general opinion in favour of a reform, before the specific plan is brought forward; which is much the same as pronouncing it improper to lay the foundation of a house, before you raise the superstructure. It is indeed too hard on the plain common sense of every man who sees the moral, religious, and political evils of the present representation, to expect him to be prepared with a new and unexceptionable plan of his own. The foundation of the plea for a reform is the subsisting mischiefs. Till they are ascertained, both as to their existence, and to their sufficient magnitude, the proposal will neither meet nor deserve attention. But when they are once proved, its friends are not to be turned round by a premature demand of plans which it does not lie with them to give in the first instance, though at a proper time and place some of them may be ready to offer their ideas

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on the subject. This violent outcry for specific plans in the outset from those who are against any plan at all, is nothing more than a manoeuvre to divide those on the means of execution who agree in the general principle. It is the business of the people, who are aggrieved, to state the facts. It is that of the legislature to discover and apply the remedy.*

It is said that a partial reform is ridiculous and impracticable, and a complete reform would bring on a revolution. I answer that the opening the boroughs of Shoreham and Cricklade was a partial reform, and was neither ridiculous nor impracticable. The experiment tried on so small a scale, has completely succeeded.

If by a complete reform be meant a wise and well digested plan, framed and sanctioned by the legislature, and properly guarded, so as to give the people peaceably an adequate representation in parliament; and by a revolution the dethronement of the king, and the destruction of the legislature; I say one does not follow from the other. Indeed, the word *revolution* seems to be used by the enemies of reform as

* This objection is now completely done away, not only by the present Plan, but by that excellent one laid before the Public by the Friends of the People.

an undefined bugbear. As I have defined it, I will not admit it to be a necessary, or a natural, or a probable consequence of a reform in the representation. It is childish or deceitful to say, that unless rigid and absolute perfection can be attained, not one step should be taken towards it ; that because you may not be able to do every thing, you are to do nothing ; and that you are not to comply with a just demand for fear of giving ground for an unjust one. Most of the general arguments, *ab inconvenienti*, against reform, may be reduced to these principles, which, if adopted, would banish prudence, justice, and improvement of every kind from human society.

Let us now examine the pleas for continuing the present mode of considering seats in parliament as objects of patronage, and a marketable commodity.

It is said an equal representation is impracticable. This is a favourite phrase with authors, as well as with ministers ; and with them implies much the same as a miser does, when on being asked by his friend to lend him a hundred pounds ; he replies, indeed I *cannot* ; meaning, indeed I *will not*. A representation much more perfect than the present, equal enough to answer every good purpose,
and

and to satisfy every reasonable man, is *very* practicable.

It is said, that the variety of circumstances under which the boroughs and counties are placed, prevents any combination among the electors to destroy the constitution. But it is not a combination of the *electors* for that purpose that is to be feared, but of the *elected*; which is dreadfully facilitated by the corrupt aristocratical influence which nominates the majority independantly of the people. It is a known fact that the owners of parliamentary patronage are the masters of the country. Ministers are less the king's servants than theirs; and are obliged to distribute honours and emoluments among them, not as rewards for public services, but to keep them from opposition.* The opposition on the other hand

* Among many other stories to confirm this, I have heard the following: In the ministry of the Duke of Newcastle, there was a vacancy of the office of Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners. The late Lord F—— went to his levee, and desired to be recommended to the King for the appointment. The Duke, the civilest of men, was extremely sorry he had not been acquainted before with his Lordship's wish, which now he feared it was impossible to comply with, the place being already promised. Lord F—— was equally civil, and sorry, but desired his Grace just to recollect, *that they were seven*. The Duke started, hesitated, still feared it could not be, as the King's

hand is chiefly the aristocratic minority, who are trying at all hazards to expel the ministry, in order to follow in their places the same miserable business of intrigue and corruption*. To counteract this aristocratical influence, which had ruled with uncontrolled sway since the accession of the house of Brunswick, there was formed at the beginning of the present reign, and as it was supposed under the auspices of the Earl of Bute, a party since known by the name of King's friends. These, though not ministers themselves, were the creators and directors of those in responsible offices; and by means of the decided ascendance of the power of the sovereign, generally exerted in the milder form of influence, but when necessary in the more formidable shape of prerogative, have been the makers and unmakers of ministries, and the *Primum Mobile* of all our politics. Had these men possessed wise and enlarged minds instead of cunning and little ones, they would have seen that, to relieve the crown from the

King's word was pledged, but would mention it at his next audience. Lord F—— left him, only repeating the salutary hint *that they were seven*. He had the place.

* This is much less true since the apostacy of the Duke of Portland and his friends. The minority, though smaller, is proportionably purer.

fetters

fetters of aristocracy, it was necessary to unite with the *people*; who are very distinct from the set of jobbers and borough-holders, who have sometimes impudently called themselves so. This union might have been effected to the advantage of both parties, as well as of the public, by the friends of the crown bringing forward and carrying through a substantial reform in the representation. Instead of that, they involved the King, during the early part of his reign, in a foolish and unpopular quarrel with Mr. Wilkes; which they pursued till they implicated with it such important and unconstitutional questions, that many who disliked the man, were compelled on principle to support his cause. They then, on still more dangerous grounds, began the dispute with America, and ripened it into a war; at first made in a degree popular by artifice, and at last, though too late, execrated by the whole nation. After nine years breathing time, in which the people, being left to themselves, recovered in a great degree the miserable consequences of the folly of their rulers, the same party, having resolved on war, have renewed the same scenes of inflammatory delusion. It will hereafter be asserted in the present case, as in the former, and with equal falsity, when the expences and taxes of

of the war have destroyed its popularity, that they who led and drove the people into it were themselves forced into it by the voice of the people*.

The true preservative against the principles of republicans and levellers does not consist in the circulation of general and indiscriminate praises of our own constitution, and equally indiscriminate abuse of all that differ from it, but in a willing attention on the part of government and the legislature to the well-founded complaints of grievances preferred by the people, and a cordial co-operation with them in adapting proper remedies, in a strict watch by their representatives over the public purse at home, and in a special care not to seek for war abroad. Had the servants of the crown, or their directors, adopted this broad and liberal conduct, instead of the narrow and insecure one of establishing their own power by undermining first one party and then another, they would have better served both the king and the state. His crown, instead of being lined with thorns, as I fear he must frequently have found it, would have sat easy on his head. The people, their property undi-

* This prediction is fulfilled. It was written two years ago.
minished

minished by new and oppressive taxes, and their personal liberty uninvaded by severe and irritating regulations to enforce their payment, would have risen to a prosperity unexampled in the height of its attainment, as in the solidity of its foundation. Such would have been our state, had we possessed a fair and uncorrupt representation before the American war. Dismal as our prospect was in the latter periods of that war, it will be tenfold more gloomy if we do not speedily put an end to the present one, and secure ourselves against the future follies and rashness of ministers by a representation of the people, which they shall not find so easy to persuade to measures against the interest of their constituents.

But here, alas! lies the real pinch of the business—A minister knows the management of the present House of Commons, and is full as well informed as the association of the Friends of the People of the interests and complexions of the bodies who return members, as well as of their patrons. He knows the springs he must touch, the persuasions he must use, the allurements he must hold out, the alarms he must give to keep his troops firm to their standard, and to increase their
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numbers. But he knows too, that this profitable science would sink into insignificance before a real representation of the people. Were this to take place, it is probable, that after many manœuvres of the old school on the part of ministers, they would discover, that the easiest way of conducting the government was by openness and honesty, and by satisfying the nation that its interest was the primary object of its rulers. It is true, that till this was done they could have no peace; but I do not consider the repose of a minister as sacred enough to protect abuses.

To prove a Reform of Parliament unnecessary, it is asserted that when the people through the nation decidedly shew their opinion, the King, Lords, and Commons immediately comply. But I say, that at present there is no certain way of deciding what is the sense of the people: their present representatives do not utter it. Addresses, especially when they coincide with the supposed inclinations of government, are equally fallacious. I believe the sense of the people to have been against the continuance of the American War, for years before its conclusion. I believe the sense of the people to be at this moment against the present war, and

our continental engagements in consequence. But ministers and their majorities will never acknowledge the sense of the people to be in opposition to their inclinations, till dire necessity compels them; and of that necessity, not they, but the people are the victims.

But the great argument in the mouths of those who have more shame and candour than to deny the flagrant abuses of elections, is this,—“ We know they are theoretically bad and absurd, but in practice they answer, for we have prospered under them.” As there is no sophism more general than this, even with sensible men, it deserves a serious consideration.

I must first observe, that it is a fallacy to reason from the apparent power of a state collectively, and the opulence of the individuals of the higher ranks in it, to the excellence of its government. These are compatible with, and have been often found under despotism and tyranny. They were found in ancient times, under Tiberius, Domitian, Commodus, and Heliogabalus; and in modern ones under Louis XIV. and his successor. It is also a fallacy to compare the effects of a government, which contains in it the principles of freedom, with those of governments which

which contain no such principles at all. We may be in a better situation than our neighbours, and yet far enough from that which we have a right to, and to which the principles of our government, freed from abuses, and operating fairly, would raise us.

That is a truly good government in which the poor are generally virtuous and contented, the rich enlightened and benevolent ; in which every man, of every condition, feels himself attached to his country, as belonging to it, and filling a place in it ; in which injuries are few, and their redress easy ; where the law, within the reach and the pocket of every man, unembarrassed by useless forms, and speedy, as well as just in its decisions, is appealed to with confidence as a friend, not dreaded as an oppressor ; where crimes and punishments are proportionate ; where chastisement, moderate but certain, treads close on the heels of guilt ; where pure religion is respected, without depriving any man of his civil rights for speculative opinions ; where all ranks, and particularly the poor, have ample opportunities for instruction in their moral and political duties ; where the governors prefer the morals of their subjects to any revenue they can derive from their vices, and the governed

have a sufficient affection for their country to do their public duties without being bribed or forced to it. On the contrary, that is not a good government where the poor are vicious and ignorant, the rich corrupt, selfish, and luxurious; where many of the lower ranks know nothing of a country but from the taxes they are forced to pay, or from the violence with which they are dragged from their habitations to hazard their lives in its service; where the law in civil cases is always too dear for the poor, and sometimes for the rich; and in criminal ones, capriciously confounds the most different degrees of guilt in a common punishment; and separates those which are scarcely distinguishable by one widely different; where access to civil offices of honour and profit is barred by tests that exclude a considerable part of the community merely on account of religious opinions; where religion is made a trade, and its revenues engrossed; where the government prefers revenue to the morals of the people; and where the love of the country is so generally extinguished, that the great ambition of men is not to serve it, but to get by it.

If the state of our government and manners resemble the former more than the latter picture,

picture, the abuses complained of, however formidable in theory, are of little practical consequence. But if, on the contrary, the latter is the truer copy, we have no reason to boast of the practical perfection to which they have conducted us.

Another manner of clothing the same sophistry is this: It is said that, however absurd and indefensible the formation of the House of Commons may be in theory, still in practice it answers as well as any other mode; for that every liberal class of society finds entrance there, and every various interest of the nation its peculiar protectors; that in whatever manner the elections were regulated, we could not expect in it an union of more property and talents; and that therefore it signifies little who are electors.

I answer, that these assumptions must be proved before they are allowed. I may contend, that the individuals sent there from the different classes of society are not those who would be fairly selected by the people, but are willing to barter their independence for the sake of a seat in Parliament; and to be the servants of the great man, or minister, who nominates them; and that it is probable more public virtue, more talents, and even more

property would be introduced by free elections. But for the moment I will concede that the present House of Commons is selected from the same ranks of society, contain just the same quantity of talents and property, and in short is composed of the same identical individuals as would have been sent there by the freest election, still the conclusion, that it signifies little who elects them, does not follow.

He who is sent to the House of Commons, is the servant of his sender; if he be sent by an unbribed majority of his fellow citizens to watch over their interests, and with little opportunity of sacrificing them to his own, he will remain their honest agent. If he be nominated by a minister or a borough owner, he will vote as his master directs; unless he has purchased his seat, and emancipation with it. In that case, feeling no obligation to any thing but his purse, he will naturally endeavour to return it by taking care his pocket, at least, shall not suffer; and by bartering the power it has gained him for a reimbursement of his expences with interest. It is known to be a point of honour among parliamentary dealers, that when a man has been brought

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into parliament by another free of expence, he is to vote as his employer pleases, or resign his seat, however his conscience and the clearest interest of his country may dictate the contrary. But let the same man be freely elected, his conscience is unfettered, his mind expands, and he is prepared to speak and act with dignity and independence. His conduct will be as different as his situation. The former purchaser of his seat, when freely elected, can no longer insult his Constituents with the profligate language of, "I have bought you, and I will sell you;" but if he has either virtue or honour, if he loves reputation or fears disgrace, he must be faithful to his trust. Therefore, instead of it signifying little who elects to the House of Commons, it is of the highest consequence that the people should exercise this most important of their public duties, fairly, freely, and fully. Were it it not so, the crown might as well convoke an assembly of notables, and tell us, it was just as good as a parliament. The legitimate weight of the monarchy and aristocracy in our Constitution is great enough to require the utmost vigour in the democratical part to preserve the rights of the people. The present mode of election of

the guardians of those rights answers as little in practice as it does in theory. It gives ministers the unconstitutional power of influencing parliament to authorise in the first instance their weak and dangerous projects; thereby screening themselves from responsibility, and making its authority their auxiliary in deluding the nation. This they have done in many instances, besides the two great ones of the American and the present war. These two capital misfortunes could never have reached us, had the House of Commons been the creature of the people.

There are many both in and out of parliament, who profess themselves friends to reform in general, but who now oppose it, on the pretence that the time is improper, on account of the supposed prevalence of republican and levelling principles. That such principles prevail I deny, and I appeal to the numerous associations against them for my proof. I firmly believe the number of those who wish to introduce French democracy into this country, to be contemptibly small; and I think it a libel on the people of England, who have so explicitly and universally declared their principles, to say otherwise. There is not a tenth
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nor a hundredth part of this description of men as there were of Jacobites in 1715 and 1745 ; yet they, a more numerous as well as a more powerful body, with foreign aid too, failed to overturn the constitution. They are therefore nothing in the political balance, and in this case may be laid quite out of the question. But granting them to be really formidable for their numbers and ability, what will be the wisest mode of disappointing their schemes of anarchy ? Will it be for us obstinately to defend the rotten parts of our constitution, which are so open to their attacks ; or like wise and skilful generals, to destroy the present ruinous and untenable outwork of representation ; and by rebuilding it conformable to the original plan of the fortrefs, to render our defences complete, and our constitution invulnerable ? They tell us you have no constitution, your representation is a farce, and you are bought and sold by your ministers and your parliament. Let the legislature, by adopting a wise and substantial reform, enable us to reply that we *have* a real and efficient constitution, the same in practice as in theory ; an uncorrupt parliament ; and a free and fair representation. Their best arguments being thus

thus defeated by the sense of the people, they must be reduced to silence. On the contrary, the public mind is so awakened on the subject of the abuses of the representation, notwithstanding the late defeat of the proposal for their remedy, that on every occurrence of danger and difficulty it will impute the distresses of the country to this source. Should those distresses increase with the progress of the war, it is possible that ministers may have taken the shortest way to establish a republic at home, instead of destroying one abroad. The people, in redressing themselves, generally do too much; and even what is not too much, is generally done ill. Let those, who have opposed the union of the people to the king and the lords by a fair representation, look well to the consequences of their conduct. If ever that union was requisite, it is now.

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